

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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UNITED WORSHIP TO MARK CENTENNIAL

In commemoration and thanksgiving services, a union worship service on Tuesday, November 3, at 1:00 p.m., will mark the centennial of the Protestant Christian mission in Japan. Representatives of all Christian groups in Japan have been invited to share with NCC-related groups in this service at the Tokyo Metropolitan Arena, Sendagaya. The number of worshippers will probably exceed the capacity limit of ten thousand, so worshippers are urged to come early for proper seating.

Among the significant Japanese leaders who will bring greetings are Premier Kishi and Governor Azuma of Tokyo, with greetings from many inter-national and regional Christian groups given by their representatives -- WCC, EACC, etc. The main address will be delivered by vice-chairman of the NCC in Japan, Presiding Bishop Michael H. Yashiro of the Seikokai (Episcopal).

In this meeting, special recognition will be paid to both laymen and pastors. Names are now being gathered of laymen who have been baptized believers for 50 years or longer, and it is estimated that the total will exceed 2000 persons. Pastors or evangelists who have spent 50 years or more in Christian service will be acknowledged as well as a second groups of pastors and evangelists who have served for 40 years or longer.

Commemorative Dinner: Those who attend the afternoon meeting are eligible to apply for admission to the special commemorative dinner, to be held at 5 o'clock in the Japan Youth Building in the rear of the

Meiji Jingu Outer Gardens. Unfortunately, the limited number of seats (1200) for the dinner will restrict attendance to the honored over-seas guests and to those early applicants. Registration fee for the combined worship service (¥200) and dinner (¥500) should be sent in immediately to the "Reception Committee, Centennial Assembly, NCC, Kyobunkan."

Following the dinner, and open meeting featuring Centennial lectures will be held, again at the Metropolitan Arena, from 7:00 p.m. The honored speakers will be Dr. Tokutaro Kitamura and the Rev. Zenta Watanabe.

Dr. Tokutaro Kitamura, an officer of the Mitake Church, is a former head of the Kyobunkan and a Kyodan officer. He has also been active in NARA activities. In political life, he is a member of the Liberal-Democratic party and a present member of the House of Representatives. Now on his third trip to the Soviet Union, he is engaged in helping prepare a commercial treaty between the Soviet Union and Japan.

The Rev. Zenta Watanabe, a former professor of Aoyama Gakuin University and at present teaching at St. Paul's University, studied under J. Ellhausen in Germany. He is probably the most able and beloved of early Old Testament scholars in Japan; among his many books are "Outline of the OT", "History of the People of Israel", "History of the Literature of Israel", "Introduction to the Pentateuch". He is also well-known as a pastor, and is the pastor-emeritus of the Ginza Church. Among his books is a volume of collected sermons, entitled "Before and after Conversion".

These two addresses, by men of long devotion and varied service to the Church of Christ in Japan promise to be among the most important events of the Centennial celebration.

APPOINTMENT OF CHRISTIAN HISTORICAL SITES

In keeping with the spirit of commemoration in this Centennial year, the following important historical sites (24) have been officially recognized by the National Council of Churches:

(1) The mission of Dr. Clark to the Sapporo Agricultural School (1876) was ended at a special farewell meeting held for him. To his students, among whom were many of the early Christian leaders, he said finally, "Boys, be ambitious". That point of farewell has now been appropriately recognized by a memorial. (2) A memorial will be erected to the work of John Batchelor who, from 1878, worked among the Ainu tribes. He prepared both a Bible for their use and the first dictionary of their language. (3) Yoichi Honda, an early bishop and pioneer worker of the Methodist Church, led Hirosaki Church from which many early Methodist ministers later came. His work will be memorialized. (4) The first church in Tokyo was at Tsukiji (5) and with it as the center of activities for early missionaries, many schools were founded, e.g. Meiji Gakuin, Aoyama Gakuin, and St. Paul's University. (6) The YMCA, at Kanda, was the meeting place for and the source of inspiration for many "cultural meetings" of the Meiji era. (7) Work of the Salvation Army, begun in 1895 in Japan, will be noted by honoring its early center,

8) as will the place of the early Holiness church work. In Yokohama, the places to be recognized include (9) the first missionary residence area, (10) Kaigan, the first church in Japan, (11) Dr. Hepburn's dispensary and Mrs. Hepburn's co-educational school site, (12) Shinrei, the first Baptist church in Japan, (13) S. R. Brown's school, located in his home, from which came many of the leading Japanese churchmen: Koichi Honda, Masahisa Uemura, Masayoshi Oshikawa, Hideteru Yamamoto and Kajinosuke Ibuka. In the Kansai area, commemorated points are: (14) Doshisha University and the house of its founder, Jo Niijima, (15) the place where the first Protestant Christian martyr, Einosuke Ichikawa, died while imprisoned in Kyoto, (16) Kawaguchi Trinity Church, Osaka, which was the cathedral for Bishop Williams, and (17) the first church in Kobe, begun by the American Board.

Other significant points are: (18) the orphanage founded in Okayama by Juji Ishii, which was the first orphanage in Japan, (19) the missionary residence of Barclay Buxton in Matsue City, (20) Captain Janes' school in Kumamoto, which led to the covenant of Christian faith by 35 of his students on Mount Hanaoka, (21) the first Evangelical Lutheran church in Saga City, (22) the missionary school of Verbeck in Nagasaki (23) the first missionary residence in Nagasaki and (24) the residence of B. E. Bettelheim in Okinawa.

HOME FOR AGED MINISTERS, WIDOWS TO BE COMPLETED

One of the acute problems in post-war Japan has been adequate pension funds and residences for retired ministers or their widows. In 1958 statistics listed 434 ministers of 65 years of age or older. The housing problem will be in part solved when the Home for Elderly People (Rojin Ho-mu) is completed in October. It is located in Ome, northwest of Tokyo proper, in a low mountainous area. Land was donated by a non-Christian elderly couple in the city who have no immediate heirs and who have long admired the Christian pastor of Ome, the Rev. Minishiro Uyama.

The first building will be ready for occupancy in November. The one-story, 86-tsubo structure -- built through a new process using "foam cement", which eliminates cold and sweating walls -- is fire-proof. Comprised of five "6-mat" rooms and seven "4½ mat" rooms, it will house 4 persons.

Funds for the new building have been gathered by "The Japanese Ministers' Welfare Association", especially organized for this purpose and under the direction of four ministers, (The Revs. Giichi Chiba, Harukichi Sato, Matsutaro Iwama, and Kensaku Tazaki), representatives of the Christian Women's Association of Japan and of Tokyo, and a layman Mr. P. Hiroshi Hayashi. The original cost was set at 5 million yen, but the new type of construction raised costs to 6 and one-third million yen. Therefore, approximately 1 million yen is still necessary to complete payment for the construction. Donations have so far been received from a large part of the Christian community in Japan.

The home will be owned and operated for the benefit of all retired Christian pastors and their widows in Japan.

AVACO NEWS RELEASETenth Anniversary Observed

In October of 1949 the newly-formed Audio Visual Activities Committee of the National Christian Council of Japan (AVACO) held its first meeting. On October 24th of this year AVACO celebrates its tenth anniversary in special services to be held at the Christian Audio Visual Center in Tokyo, 2 - 4:00 p.m.

At the time the committee first met it had no staff and an annual subsidy from over-seas of approximately five hundred dollars. Now, AVACO, through the Grace of God, has grown to have an annual budget of fifty thousand dollars, a staff of thirty-seven persons and is housed in the two story ferro-concrete Christian Audio Visual Center at Aoyama Gakuin University. AVACO has grown not only in staff and program, but also in self-support, some sixty percent of its budget now being raised in Japan. Since 1950 AVACO has been under the direction of Mr. Mathew S. Ogawa.

AVACO produces three fifteen minute radio programs each week broadcast over from three to six each of seventeen different stations. The sponsored broadcast, "Songs of the Heart", featuring the AVACO Radio Chorus reaches close to a million listeners each week at a total cost per week of one hundred fifty dollars. In addition, AVACO serves as liaison with government network II for Protestant Christian broadcasting resulting in some on hundred eighty country-wide broadcasts each year by Protestant leaders.

AVACO's other activities include the conducting of several annual workshops in audio-visual education and materials and broadcasting, the publication of a monthly magazine, the production of films, filmstrips, non-projected aids and records, the operation of a film and tape library, counseling with persons on purchase and use of such materials, and the production and export of equipment such as the AVACO kerosene projector to other countries.

Among the important future projects contemplated by AVACO are the production of thirteen half hour Christian films for use on TV and in film evangelism, the production of an extremely cheap 16 mm. filmstrip projector and inexpensive filmstrips to match for use in Japan in church school classes and in other Asian countries, production of filmstrips for Christian education, and a photography department which will build a file of black and white negatives and color slides on Japan and various kinds of Christian work in Japan in addition to spot photographic coverage, movie or still, of important events in the life of the churches.

A four story addition to the Christian Audio Visual Center, allowing space for such new activities, is to be finished by the middle of October and dedicated as a part of the anniversary celebration.

"Songs of the Heart" Over New Station

AVACO program, "Songs of the Heart", featuring hymns and short evangelistic talks, previously been sponsored over Radio Tokyo by AVACO and broadcast on free time in three other areas, will be sponsored over Radio Iwate by a group related to the United Church of Christ, from the middle of October.

